

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 NSA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00

COA-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-04 EPA-01 INR-05 IO-10 L-02

NSF-01 NSC-05 PM-03 RSC-01 OES-02 SS-15 SP-02 AEC-05

CEA-01 CIEP-01 FPC-01 H-01 INT-05 OMB-01 SAM-01

STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-01 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /099 W

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R 132110Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4962

INFO AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE OTTAWA 3697

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CA

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

DURING COURSE OF EMBOFF VISIT TO VARIOUS BC GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS IN VICTORIA, FOLLOWING ITMES WERE TOUCHED UPON:

1. SKAGIT RIVER. BC OFFICIALS ALLEGE THAT BC GOVERNMENT
ANXIOUS TO RESOLVE SKAGIT RIVER PROBLEM AND SAW NO REASON
WHY FAIR SOLUTION COULD NOT BE FOUND. WHEN EMBOFF EXPRESSED
DISAPPOINTMENT THAT PROPOSAL FOR BC TO PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE
SOURCE OF POWER HAD NOT BEEN RECEIVED MORE FAVORABLY, BC
OFFICIALS QUICKLY POINTED OUT THAT PROPOSAL DEFINITELY
RECEIVING POSITIVE CONSIDERATION. ONE OFFICIAL CITED A
BC PAPER WHICH ALLEGEDLY SUGGESTED THREE-POINT SOLUTION:

(1) CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT WITH COMPENSATION
FOR EXPENSES INCURRED;

(2) CREATION OF PARK, POSSIBLY INTERNATIONAL,
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IN SKAGIT RIVER AREA, AND

(3) PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF POWER
TO SEATTLE.

WHILE BC OFFICIALS DID NOT IDENTIFY SOURCE OF PROPOSAL
FURTHER, OTTAWA OFFICIAL SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED EMBOFF
THAT PROPOSALS HAD BEEN MADE TO OTTAWA IN LETTER FROM BC
PREMIER BARRETT TO PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU. OTTAWA
APPARENTLY HAS NOT YET RESPONDED AND IS SOMEWHAT
UNCERTAIN ABOUT SINCERITY OF BARRETT GOVERNMENT
IN MAKING THESE PROPOSALS.

2. PUGET SOUND. BC OFFICIALS APPEAR RESIGNED TO
ALASKAN OIL BEING SHIPPED TO CHERRY POINT REFINERYS.
HOWEVER, THEY STRESSED THAT CURRENT POLICY OF BC
GOVERNMENT IS TO URGE US GOVERNMENT TO SEEK ALTERNATIVE
SITES TO UNLOAD FUEL FROM TANKERS (E.G. OFF SHORE SITES
WITH PIPELINES TO REFINERY). THEY ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT
BC PETROLEUM IS SEEKING SITE TO BUILD REFINERY, PRESUMABLY
SOMEWHERE IN STRAIT OF GEORGIA AREA.

3. FLATHEAD RIVER COAL MINE (RIO ALGOM). NEWS
OF POSSIBLE COAL MINE ON FLATHEAD RIVER IN BC CAME AS
SURPRISE TO OFFICIALS VISITED BY EMBOFF. THEY CITED
BC ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS WHICH THEY ASSUMED WOULD APPLY
IF COAL DEPOSITS WERE TO BE MINED AND SURMISED PROBLEM
BEING HANDLED IN OTHER MINISTRIES OF BC GOVERNMENT.

4. POINT ROBERTS. BC GOVERNMENT HAD JUST RECEIVED
IJC LETTER SUGGESTING POINT ROBERTS PROBLEM BE RESOLVED
BY BC-WASHINGTON STATE CONSULTATIONS.
OFFICIALS DID NOT SEEM DISMAYED BY IJC
PROPOSAL AND AGREED IN OFF-HAND MANNER
THAT BC AND WASHINGTON SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK OUT SOLUTION
IF BC'S INTERESTS IN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF POINT ROBERTS
ARE ACKNOWLEDGED.
PORTER

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